

What is claimed is:

1 1. A method for assisting a conference unit in
2 performing participant identification in a conference of a
3 plurality of participants, comprising the steps of:
4 detecting a change in an active participant among a
5 set of the plurality of participants using an endpoint
6 telecommunication unit by the endpoint telecommunication unit;
7 and
8 signaling the detected change to a conference unit by
9 the endpoint telecommunication unit.

1 2. The method of claim 1 wherein the step of
2 detecting comprises the step of using speech processing.

1 3. The method of claim 2 wherein the endpoint
2 telecommunication unit is a telecommunication terminal.

1 4. The method of claim 2 wherein the endpoint
2 telecommunication unit is a remote switch connecting a
3 telecommunication terminal used by a subset of the set of the
4 plurality of participants to the conference unit.

1 5. The method of claim 1 wherein the step of
2 detecting comprises determining a use of a speakerphone on
3 the endpoint telecommunication unit.

1 6. A method for performing participant identification in
2 a conference of a plurality of participants, comprising the steps

3 of:
4 detecting a change in an active participant among a
5 set of the plurality of participants using an endpoint
6 telecommunication unit by the endpoint telecommunication unit;
7 signaling the detected change to a conference unit by
8 the endpoint telecommunication unit; and
9 determining a new participant of the set of the plurality
10 of participants by the conference unit in response to signaled
11 change whereby the conference unit processes speech
12 information from only the endpoint telecommunication unit.

1 7. The method of claim 6 wherein the step of
2 detecting comprises the step of using speech processing.

1 8. The method of claim 7 wherein the endpoint
2 telecommunication unit is a telecommunication terminal.

1 9. The method of claim 7 wherein the endpoint
2 telecommunication unit is a remote switch connecting a
3 telecommunication terminal used by a subset of the set of the
4 plurality of participants to the conference unit.

1 10. The method of claim 6 wherein the step of
2 detecting comprises determining a use of a speakerphone on
3 the endpoint telecommunication unit.

1 11. A system for providing a conference, comprising:
2 a conference unit;

3 a system controller;
4 a plurality of endpoint telecommunication units;
5 system controller establishing the conference for a set
6 of participants using a plurality of endpoint telecommunication
7 units;
8 one of the plurality of endpoint telecommunication
9 units providing service for a subset of the set of the plurality of
10 participants, detecting a change in a new active participant of
11 the subset of the set of the plurality of participants and signaling
12 the change to the system controller;
13 system controller responsive to the signaled change to
14 request the conference unit identify the new active participant of
15 the subset of the set of the plurality of participants; and
16 the conference unit identifying the new active
17 participant and signaling the identity to the system controller.

1 12. The system of claim 11 wherein the one of the
2 plurality of endpoint telecommunication units detects the new
3 active participant by executing a speech process function.

1 13. The system of claim 12 wherein the one of the
2 plurality of endpoint telecommunication units is a
3 telecommunication terminal.

1 14. The system of claim 12 wherein the one of the
2 endpoint telecommunication units is a remote switch connecting
3 a telecommunication terminal used by a subset of the set of the
4 plurality of participants to the conference unit.

1 15. Apparatus for detecting a change in active
2 participant among a plurality of participants at a
3 telecommunication unit, comprising:
4 means for receiving audio information from the
5 plurality of participants;
6 means for performing speech processing to detect the
7 change in active participant among the plurality of participants;
8 and
9 means for transmitting a message to a conference
10 means indicating the change in the active participant.

1 16. A processor-readable medium comprising
2 processor-executable instructions on an endpoint
3 telecommunication unit configured for:
4 detecting a change in an active participant among a
5 set of the plurality of participants using the endpoint
6 telecommunication unit; and
7 signaling the detected change to a conference unit.

1 17. The processor-readable medium of claim 16
2 wherein the detecting comprises using speech processing.

1 18. The processor-readable medium of claim 17
2 wherein the endpoint telecommunication unit is a
3 telecommunication terminal.

1 19. The processor-readable medium of claim 17

2 wherein the endpoint telecommunication unit is a remote switch
3 connecting a telecommunication terminal used by the set of the
4 plurality of participants to the conference unit.

1 20. The processor-readable medium of claim 16
2 wherein the detecting comprises determining a use of a
3 speakerphone on the endpoint telecommunication unit.

1 21. A processor-readable medium comprising
2 processor-executable instructions configured for:
3 detecting a change in an active participant among a
4 set of the plurality of participants using an endpoint
5 telecommunication unit;
6 signaling the detected change to a conference unit;
7 and
8 determining a new participant of the set of the plurality
9 of participants by the conference unit in response to the
10 signaled change whereby only speech information from the
11 endpoint telecommunication unit is processed.

1 22. The processor-readable medium of claim 21
2 wherein the detecting comprises using speech processing.

1 23. The processor-readable medium of claim 22
2 wherein the endpoint telecommunication unit is a
3 telecommunication terminal.

1 24. The processor-readable medium of claim 22

2 wherein the endpoint telecommunication unit is a remote switch
3 connecting a telecommunication terminal used by the set of the
4 plurality of participants to the conference unit.

1 25. The processor-readable medium of claim 21
2 wherein the detecting comprises determining a use of a
3 speakerphone on the endpoint telecommunication unit.